

## Tips for a Healthy Family Lifestyle and Resources

### Food

- Start healthy habits early. Model healthy habits.
- Eat meals together (teaches and models smart eating habits)
- Eat at a table with TV off, and make it a pleasant time.
- Establish a structure for meal and snack times and only allow eating at those times.
- Limit eating to only certain areas of the home.
- Open and close kitchen. Open for meals only (green sign at the door) closed at other times (red sign at the door).
- Let kids help themselves to food. Adults tend to dish out bigger serving sizes and expect kids to clean their plates. Kids need to develop their own cues for hunger and feeling full. Disband the “Clean Plate club.”
- When serving meals cover half the plate with fruits and vegetables, and contents of lunch sacks should be half fruits and vegetables.
- Involve the kids in planning meals and preparing them (e.g. school lunches).
- Don’t overly restrict sweets.
- Offer water when thirsty, milk at meals, soda and juice as treats only.
- Increase access to fruits and veggies by preparing ahead of time.
- Bottom shelf of refrigerator into anytime anywhere foods. Already prepared veggies and fruits.
- Set aside an accessible area of the kitchen for healthy snacks that are in pre-portion sizes so family members can help themselves.
- Place treats and special occasion foods in a hard to reach location.
- Introduce reasonable solid foods not french fries and soda.
- All family members participate in the “Five a Day Challenge” winner chooses the family activity for the week.
- Reward children with praise and time together not food.
- Watch portion sizes

### Activity

- Be more active. Take 10 minutes to play Frisbee, go to the park and shoot hoops, go for a walk.
- Limit TV and video time. Decrease inactivity time. Consider adding a dance video game to your system without restriction of time played. Playstation, Nintendo game cube, and Xbox all offer these physically active games.
- Buy birthday and holiday presents that promote movement, such as roller skates, Frisbees etc.
- Find activities in your community such as hiking trails, swimming pools, skating rinks.
- Set family goals (walk three times a week). Write them down. (see resources for trackers)
- Take turns selecting the activity.
- Schedule active times into schedule such as walk after school or work, ride bikes.
- Special weekend activity such as flying kites, playing tennis.
- Individualize activity to your child. Some kids enjoy team sports and some enjoy solitary activity.
- Each family member wears a pedometer and strives for 10,000 steps per day.
- Everyone helps with yard work, housecleaning and washing the car.
- Model a daily active lifestyle. Walk instead of drive. Park further from the store. Take the stairs.
- Plan parties and vacations around movement and play. Swimming party instead of a movie.
- Start family home evening with a physical activity.
- Ask the school for the “safe routes” map. Every school is required to have a map of the safe walking routes.
- Start a “Walking School Bus”. The family that lives farthest from the school starts walking and picks up other children along the way until they reach the school.
- Investigate your local school for amount of PE, type of foods in vending machines, what is served for school lunch and advocate for change.

## Resources

**Video Games** (you read that correctly) The following games are physically active and offer fun, competition, choreography, and a great workout:

**Playstation** offers several dance games (Dance Dance Revolution). Add the Dance Pad to the system and it tracks the players' movements.

**Nintendo** Gamecube offers MC Groovz Dance Craze that includes the dance pad.

**Microsoft XBOX** offers Dance Dance Revolution ULTRAMIX. Can purchase a controller not included

## Trackers

**FREE Check your Health** Nutrition and Activity Tracker, available at your local Dan's and Jubilee grocery stores. You may also order your FREE Tracker via [www.checkyourhealth.org](http://www.checkyourhealth.org) or at 1-888-222-2542. The site has a poster of portion sizes and a parent tip handout. They also have nutrition information, easy exercises, check-up guides, healthy snacks for kids, and packets to get people started and a hotline.

**Utah Walks** You can track your miles of walking or any other form of exercise by logging on to [www.UtahWalks.org](http://www.UtahWalks.org). Click on the mile tracker, register with a user name, and start walking. You can set up an individual account or join as a group.

## General information

**"Five a day"** [http://www.dole5aday.com/Kids/K\\_Index.jsp](http://www.dole5aday.com/Kids/K_Index.jsp)

**Walking school bus** <http://www.walkingbus.com/>

**Baylor College** and USDA teamed up with an excellent website that provides newsletters, posters of portion sizes, reading nutrition labels and an exercise poster.

A great site for children. <http://www.kidsnutrition.org/>

**Kidnetics** is an educational outreach program that promotes healthy eating and physical activity for kids and their families and is an excellent site for children.

<http://www.kidnetic.com/>

**Shape up America** is an excellent resource for families to get started. Has a tip sheet of 99 suggestions for family activities among other things. 240 631-6533

<http://www.shapeup.org/>

**The Gold Medal School Initiative** (GMSI) reaches 65,639 children in 138 schools across Utah.

[http://www.hearthighway.org/school\\_information/gold\\_medal\\_school\\_initiative/gmsi\\_main.htm](http://www.hearthighway.org/school_information/gold_medal_school_initiative/gmsi_main.htm)

**Trails in Utah** have been built and maintained for use by everyone. For maps and trails go to

[www.utahwalks.org](http://www.utahwalks.org)

**Gold Medal Miles**, Legacy Gold Medal Miles are one-mile walks designed to encourage Utahns to become more physically active. Maps can be found at [www.utahwalks.org](http://www.utahwalks.org)

Check with your local Parks and Recreation departments and your school district lifelong learning centers for a list of their programs.